

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Chris Cox Spring Development
Proposed Implementation Date:	Summer 2022
Proponent:	Christopher Cox (Surenuff Cattle)
Location:	14N 21E 16 N2NE4
County:	Fergus
Trust:	Common Schools

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The purpose of this spring development would be to provide a more reliable stock water source for the pasture. The reservoir just upstream is not consistently full but produces a small seep just downstream of the dam. This seep can be developed and produce a consistent water supply to better utilize the state pasture even when the reservoir is dry.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)
Northeastern Land Office (NELO) & Lewistown Unit Office
Proponent: Christopher Cox (Surenuff Cattle)
Surface Lessees: Christopher Cox (Surenuff Cattle)
Other:

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

The DNRC, and NELO have jurisdiction over this proposed project.

The proponent is responsible for acquiring all necessary permits for the proposed project, and settling all surface damages with the surface lessees.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A (No Action) – Under this alternative, the Department does not grant permission to develop a spring for stock water use.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action) – Under this alternative, the Department does grant permission to develop a spring for stock water use.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES* potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.
- Explain **POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS** following each resource heading.
- Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.

There were not any relevant rating for the soils in the project area. The soils around the area to be disturbed are all well vegetated and should not have any additional erosion. The disturbance will be short term and minimal so there should not be any significant compaction.

No significant cumulative impacts to geology or soil quality, stability, and moisture are anticipated.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:

Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.

This project will not effect water quality. However it will effect distribution by creating a more reliable year round source of water for livestock and wildlife.

No significant impacts to local or regional water resources are anticipated.

6. AIR QUALITY:

What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

No significant impacts to air quality are anticipated.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:

What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.

This project will only disturb a very small area of vegetation in an area that has extra subsoil moisture. Because of the species around the spring and the abundant moisture the disturbance should be revegetated naturally fairly quickly.

If re-seeding is necessary the proponent will acquire certified, weed free seed and refer to the Plant Materials Tech Note No. MT-46 (Rev. 4) dated September 2013 for seeding rates.

No rare plants or cover types are present. No significant impacts to vegetation are anticipated.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:

Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

This project will disturb a very small area of wetland that will in the end have better water access for wildlife and overall improve the habitat.

No significant impacts to terrestrial, avian, or aquatic habitats are anticipated.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:

Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

There are several species of concern noted in the project area (1 mile radius). The Dace is not likely to be affected because the channel is not perennial and therefore not connected to a water way from which the dace could move from. The bird and bat species should not be affected due to the short term nature of the construction and the benefit of additional water after completion.

Definition of Species Occurrences				USFWS Sect 7	# SO	# Occ	Predictive Model	Associated Habitat	Range
P - Northern Redbelly Dace (<i>Clinostomus dace</i>) SOC				2	1	1	Non-Adapted	NA	NA
M - Hoary Bat (<i>Lasiurus cinereus</i>) SOC				1	1	1	Adapted	NA	NA
B - Black-billed Cuckoo (<i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i>) SOC				1	1	1	Adapted	NA	NA
B - Great Blue Heron (<i>Ardea herodias</i>) SOC				1	1	1	Adapted	NA	NA

No significant impacts to unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources are anticipated, though temporary displacement of local wildlife may occur during the project.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

A Class I (literature review) level review was conducted by the DNRC staff archaeologist for the area of potential effect (APE). This entailed inspection of project maps, DNRC's sites/site leads database, land use records, General Land Office Survey Plats, and control cards. The Class I search revealed that *Antiquities* have not been identified in the APE. No additional archaeological investigative work will be conducted in response to this proposed development. However, if previously unknown cultural or paleontological materials are identified during project related activities, all work will cease until a professional assessment of such resources can be made.

No significant effects on historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources anticipated.

11. AESTHETICS:

Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.

No significant impacts on the aesthetics of the area are anticipated.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:

Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.

No limited environmental resources will be significantly impacted because of this project. This project will also not add any significant cumulative demands on environmental resources.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:

List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

There are no other projects or plans being considered on the tracts listed in this EA Checklist.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *RESOURCES* potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.
- Explain **POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS** following each resource heading.
- Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

The only risk to human health and safety will be during construction of the project. It is the responsibility of the proponent to mitigate these risks.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

This project will not add to or deter from other industrial, agricultural, or commercial activities in the area.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:

Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

The project will not create or eliminate any jobs, so no significant effects to the employment market are anticipated.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:

Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

There are no direct or cumulative effects to taxes or revenue for the proposed project.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:

Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

There will not be any significant increases in traffic, school attendance, or need for fire and police protection if this project is approved.

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:

List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

There are no zoning or other agency management plans affecting this project.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:

Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

There will be no significant direct or cumulative effects on access to or quality of recreation and wilderness activities because of this project.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:

Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing

The proposed project does not include any changes to housing or developments.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

There are no native, unique or traditional lifestyles or communities in the vicinity that would be significantly impacted by the proposal.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

The proposed project will have no significant impact on any culturally unique quality of the area.

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:

Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

The proposed project will not have any significant cumulative economic or social effect.

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative B (the Proposed Action) – Under this alternative, the Department does grant permission to develop a spring for stock water use.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

I have evaluated the potential environment effects and have determined no significant impact to the environment because of this project.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

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EIS

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More Detailed EA

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No Further Analysis

**EA Checklist
Prepared By:**

Name: Dustin Lenz

Title: Land Use Specialist

Signature:



Date:

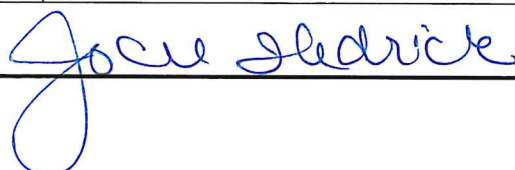
4/22/22

**EA Checklist
Approved By:**

Name: Jocee Hedrick

Title: Unit Manager, Northeastern Land Office

Signature:



Date:

4/22/22

